

# The Jackson Twins, and the Olympians The Lightning Thief

by ETechnoLegacy

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Summary: This is My remake of the PJO series, with somewhat of a twist. Percy has a twin-brother named Aaron, and Aaron isn't what you call "normal", even by Half-Blood's standards. Rated T because I'm cautious

## 1. Chapter 1

**\*\*Chapter 1\*\***

**\_\*\*We Accidentally Vapourize Our Pre-Algebra Teacher\*\*\_**

**\*\*Aaron:\*\***

look, we didn't want to be half-bloods. If you are reading this because you think you might be one, our advice is: close this book immediately.

Believe whatever your parents told you about your birth and lead a normal life. Aaron?

Aaron:

Oh, right, being a half blood is dangerous. it's scary, sometimes even of the times it gets you killed in painful and nasty ways

Percy:

If you're a normal kid, reading this book because you think its fiction, great. Read on. We envy you for being able to believe that none of

this ever happened

Aaron:

But if you recognise yourself in these pages... if you feel anything stirring inside... stop reading this book, it could save your life, you could be one

of us. And its only a matter of time before they sense it too, and they will come for you.

Don't say we didn't warn you.

Aaron, you want to start?

Okay, my name is Aaron Jackson, and my twin brother here is Percy Jackson.

We are twelve years old. Until a few months ago, we were boarding students at Yancy Academy, a private school for troubled kids in upstate New York.

Are we troubled kids?

Yeah, you could say that

We could start at anytime in our short miserable lives to prove it, but things really started going downhill last May, when our class went on a field trip to Manhattan. Twenty-Nine mental-case students and two teachers on a yellow school bus, going to the Metropolitan Museum of Art to look at dusty Ancient Greek and Roman stuff.

I know, it sounds boring. Most of the field trips at Yancy were.

But Mr. Brunner, our Latin teacher, was leading this trip, so we had high hopes.

Mr. Brunner was this middle-aged guy in a motorized wheelchair. He had thinning hair and a scruffy beard and a slightly frayed tweed jacket, which for some reason always smelled like coffee. You wouldn't think he'd be anywhere near cool, but he always told stories and jokes and let us play games in class, which was fine by me. He also had this cool collection of Roman armour and weapons, so he was the only teacher ever whose classes didn't put me to sleep.

My brother and I both hoped we wouldn't get into trouble.

Boy were we wrong...

See, bad things happen to us when we go on field trips. like our fifth grade trip to the Saratoga battlefield, Percy had this accident with a Revolutionary War cannon. He wasn't aiming at the school bus...

Percy:

Hey! In all fairness, Aaron aimed it...

Aaron:

...but we still got expelled anyways. And before that, our fourth grade school took a behind-the-scenes tour of the Marine World shark

pool. I sort of leaned against the wrong lever, and our class took an unexpected dive in the shark pool. and the time before that... well, I think I've nailed the idea in your head.

This trip we were both determined to be good.

All the way into the city, we had to put up with Nancy Bobofit, a freckly, red-headed kleptomaniac girl, trying to hit our friend Grover on the head with pieces of peanut-butter and ketchup sandwich.

Like I said, Tried.

I kept blocking the pieces of sandwich with my wings...

Oh yeah, guess I should explain that.

You see, i am... different. Well, more different, than the other kids, and my brother. For my entire life, up until my life changed, I... We, had no idea why, since we were identical twins, up until our eyes, which were slightly different. My wings were midnight black and had a span of 7 1/2 feet on each side, which I usually don't have them extended, most of the time i had them resting against my back. You will see later in the story why I have them.

Anyways, back to the story.

Grover was an easy target. He was scrawny. He cried when he got frustrated. He must have been held back a couple of grades, because he was the only sixth grader with the start of a wispy beard on his chin and a case of acne. On top of all that, he was crippled. He had a note excusing him from P.E class for the rest of his life because he had some type of muscular disease in his legs, but don't let that fool you. You should see him on enchilada day in the cafeteria, boy can he run when he wanted to...

Anyway, Nancy Bobofit was still trying to throw wads of sandwich in his hair which i still blocked with my wings, which i wish she wouldn't, that sandwich will take a while to clean out. She knew we couldn't do anything other than that about it, because the school had threatened my brother and I to in-school suspension, which might ruin us for a while, if anything bad, disastrous, embarrassing, or even mildly entertaining happened on this trip.

"I'm going to kill her," my brother growled

I tried to calm him down and remind him to what might happen if he follows through with his plan. "It's fine, I can wash it out later Perce. Remember what would happen if we tried that out now?"

I blocked another piece of Nancy's lunch.

"That's it." He started to get up, but Grover pulled him back down.

"Aaron's right, Percy. You two are already on probation," he said to my brother "You know who'll get blamed if anything happens." he said pointing at me and Percy.

Looking back on it, I wished I helped my brother execute his plan

right there and then. In-school suspension would be way better as to what would soon be happening.

Mr. Brunner led the tour through the museum.

He rode up front in his wheelchair, guiding us through the big echoey galleries, past marble statues and glass cases full of really old pottery

It blew our minds that this stuff had survived for two to three thousand years.

He gathered us all around a thirteen-foot-tall stone column with a big sphinx on the top, and started to tell us about how it was a stele, for a girl about our age. He told us about the carvings on the sides. I was trying to listen, but everybody around me was talking, and every time my brother told them to shut up, Mrs. Dodds would give us the evil eye. Mrs. Dodds was this little math teacher from Georgia who always wore a black leather jacket, even though she looked like she was from ancient times, she still looked mean enough to ride a motorcycle into your locker (which I hope she doesn't). She had come to Yancy half-way through the year when our previous math teacher had a nervous breakdown.

From her first day, Mrs. Dodds loved Nancy Bobofit and figured me and my brother were the spawn of the devil. She would point her crooked finger at us and say, "Now, honey," real sweet, and we both knew right away that we would be staying back to erase math textbooks until midnight. One time, when we got back from erasing math textbooks, Percy told Grover that he didn't think Mrs. Dodds was human. He just turned around and looked at him seriously and said, "you're absolutely right."

Mr. Brunner kept talking about Greek funeral art.

Finally, Nancy Bobofit snickered something about the naked guy on the stele, and my brother turned around, and before i could do anything, he said, "Will you shut up?"

it sounded like it came out louder than he meant to.

The entire group started laughing. Mr. Brunner stopped his story.

"Mr. Jackson," he said, "did you have a comment?"

his face looked beet red. he replied, "No, sir."

Mr. Brunner pointed to one of the carvings on the stele. "Perhaps you'll tell us what this picture represents?"

He looked at the picture and a look of relief played across his face as he recognised it. "That's Kronos eating his kids, right?"

I was surprised he even knew what that was because he never remembered what was taught in class, even if he tried his best. must be the ADHD and Dyslexia that we had.

"Yes," Mr. Brunner said, obviously not satisfied. "And can you tell us why he did this?"

I was worried he would get it wrong, but to my surprise...

"Well..." he thought. "Kronos was the king god, and..."

"God?" Mr. Brunner asked, quizzically.

"Titan." I whispered to him.

"Mr. Jackson, I do believe Percy will get this right on his own."

"Sorry, sir." I apologised.

"Continue, Percy." Mr. Brunner told my brother.

"Anyway... Kronos was the king Titan and... he didn't trust his kids, who were the gods. So, um, Kronos ate them, right? But his wife hid baby Zeus, and gave Kronos a rock to eat, instead of Zeus. Later, when Zeus grew up, he tricked his dad into barfing up his brothers and sisters..."

"Eeew!" said some of the girls behind him. I turned around and gave them my infamous death stare, and they shut up pretty quickly.

"...and so there was this big fight between the Titans and the Gods," he continued, "and the Gods won."

Some people in the group were snickering, and before I could glare at them, Nancy Bobofit said, "Like we're going to use this in real life. Like it's going to say on our job applications, 'Please explain why Kronos ate his kids.'"

"and why, Mr. Jackson," Mr. Brunner said, "to paraphrase Miss Bobofit's excellent question, does this matter in real life?"

"Busted," me and Grover both said in sync

"Shut up," she hissed, her face brighter than her hair.

At least she got packed, too. Mr. Brunner was the only teacher ever hearing her say anything bad. Gotta love those radar ears of his.

Percy thought about the question, until he gave up and shrugged. Well, I couldn't have expected him to know that, because I didn't know it either.

"I see," Mr. Brunner said, clearly disappointed. "Well, Half credit to Mr. Jackson. Zeus did in fact feed Kronos a mixture of mustard and wine, which made him disgorge his other five children, who, of course, being immortal gods, had survived and had been living inside the Titans stomach, completely undigested. The gods then defeated their father and cut him into a thousand pieces with his own scythe, and tossed his remains into the darkest part of the Underworld, Tartarus.

As he said that last word, the air turned a bit cold, and if anyone

else noticed, they didn't give in.

"And on that happy note, it's time for lunch. Mrs. Dodds, would you lead the class back outside?"

The class then drifted back outside, the girls holding their stomachs, like they were about to puke, and the guys pushing each other around and acting like doofuses.

Grover, my brother and I were about to follow when Mr. Brunner said "Jacksons."

We both saw that coming

We told Grover to go on. Then we turned to Mr. Brunner. "Sir?" we both asked.

Mr. Brunner had this look that wouldn't let go of you, unlike my 'death stare', he had intense brown eyes that looked like they've seen everything

"I need you to find the answer to my question," Mr brunner told us.

"About the Titans?"

"About real life. And how both of your studies apply to it."

"oh." was the only thing that came out of my mouth.

"What you learn from me, is vitally important. I expect you two to treat it as such. I will accept only the best from you two, Jacksons."

I flexed my wings nervously

I wanted to get angry, this guy pushed me and my brother so hard.

I mean , sure, it was cool when he would dress up in Roman armour, and would shout, "What, ho!" and challenge you sword point to chalk to name every Greek and Roman person who ever lived, and who their parents were, and what God they worshipped. But Mr. Brunner expected us to be as good... no... he expected us to be better, than the other kids, despite our ADHD and dyslexia, and we both never made above a C- in our lives.

I mumbled something about 'trying harder' and Percy said something like 'sorry, sir', while Mr. Brunner told us to go outside and eat.

We both nodded and left him stare at the stele with those thousand year old eyes.

The class gathered on the front steps of the museum, where we could watch the traffic go by.

Overhead, a huge storm was brewing, and everyone was looking at it nervously. the clouds covering New York were blacker and bigger than any other storm I had seen. The weather in New York has been weird since Christmas. We'd had massive blizzards, floods, and wildfires

from lightning strikes. I wouldn't be surprised, nor do I think anybody else would be, if this was a hurricane blowing in.

most of the kids from our school hadn't noticed the storm, but as I looked around, a lot of the adults were. Some of the guys were pelting pigeons with lunchables crackers, Nancy Bobofit was trying to pick-pocket something from a lady's purse. Naturally, Mrs. Dodds wasn't seeing a thing.

Grover, Percy, and I were sitting by a fountain away from the museum, thinking that if we didn't stay around the group of kids, nobody would think we were from That school... the school for loser freaks that couldn't make it anywhere else.

The three of us sat on the edge of the fountain facing away from the group.

"Detention?" Grover asked us.

"Naw." Percy said.

"Not from Brunner. I just wish he would lay off us sometimes, I mean, we aren't geniuses." I said.

Grover didn't reply for a while, until he said, "Can I have your apple?" he asked my brother. Percy shrugged, and said, "Sure." and tossed him the apple.

"Hey," I said. They both looked at me. "How about we use my apple as a hacky sack?" I asked.

"Sure." they both replied.

Soon, we were bouncing the apple around the three of us. I wasn't too bad, I'll have to admit, neither were Percy and Grover.

We played for a bit longer, bouncing the apple off of anything we could. Arms, legs, head, feet. I was rolling it off my wings as well.

The game ended when Grover backhanded the apple, by accident, and it went flying, until we couldn't see it.

I sighed, for we had nothing to pass the time now. Percy and Grover were talking about something, but I wasn't focusing.

I watched the stream of cabs go down Fifth Avenue, and thought about our mothers apartment, only a little ways away from here. My brother and I hadn't seen our mother since Christmas break, and I wanted, so badly, to just hop in a cab and head to her apartment. she'd hug me and be glad to see me again, but she would also be disappointed, and tell me to try harder and send me right back to Yancy.

Mr. Brunner had parked his wheelchair at the base of the handicapped ramp. He ate celery while he read a paperback novel. A white and red umbrella stuck up from the back of his wheelchair, so he looked like a mini motorized table.

I sighed at all the deep thinking I was doing and went to unwrap my sandwich when Nancy and her ugly friends showed up in front of the

three for us... I guess she'd gotten tired of trying to pickpocket tourists. and dumped her half eaten lunch on Grover's lap.

"Oops." She grinned at me with her crooked teeth, that looked like a dump truck took care of them. Her freckles were orange, as if someone melted a bunch of cheetos and put them in a spray bottle and sprayed them all over her face.

I tried to stay cool, especially when my brother usually lost it, but this time seemed to affect me as much as him. '\_Count to ten, get control of your anger\_.'

I was so angry that my mind went blank. A wave roared in my ears.

I don't remember touching her but the next thing I knew, Nancy was sitting in the fountain, soaking wet.

"You freak!" She screamed at me then repeatedly screamed that me and my brother pushed her into the fountain, which was getting annoying.

Mrs. Dodds materialized next to us.

Some of the kids were looking at Nancy and us and were whispering: "Did you see . . ."

". . . the water . . ."

". . . like, it grabbed her . . ."

One of them said with an amazed and shocked face, "They didn't even touch her"

As soon as Mrs. Dodds was finished making sure Nancy was okay, promising that she would get her a new shirt from the gift shop, etc . . .

Mrs. Dodds turned to me and my brother with a triumphant look on her face, as if we just did something she had been waiting for all semester. "Now, honey . . ."

"I know," Percy grumbled. "A month erasing workbooks"

I physically face-palmed at what he said, which definitely got us into more trouble.

"Come with me," Mrs. Dodds said

"Wait!" Grover almost screamed "It was me! \_I\_ pushed her into the fountain."

My brother and I looked at him a bit shocked at what he said. Mrs. Dodds scared Grover to death, and here he was taking the blame, sacrificing his free time for hell with Mrs. Dodds.

"I don't think so, Mr. Underwood," She said.

"But . . ."

"You. Will. Stay. Here." she said demanding

Grover looked between us desperately

"It's okay man," I told him, "You tried," Percy finished

"Honey," Mrs. Dodds practically barked. "\_Now\_"

Nancy Bobofit smirked

I gave her my infamous death stare, and she went pale and shrank back into the towel currently wrapped around her.

I looked back to Mrs. Dodds, only to find she was at the museum entrance already.

I tapped my brother in the shoulder, and he turned around to look at me. He raised an eyebrow, and I pointed to Mrs. Dodds, which he looked surprised at.

"How did she get up there so fast?" he asked me.

"I don't think we will ever know."

We walked up the stairs to the museum, leaving me thinking if this was my ADHD acting up, because I have had moments like that where my brain falls asleep, or something, and the next thing you know, I missed something important. Though I know for a fact, that Percy has them way more than I do.

Though I wasn't too sure this time . . .

We both looked at each other, and shrugged. Then we went to follow Mrs. Dodds up the steps.

Halfway up, Percy glanced back, so I did the same to see what he was looking at, and I saw Grover nervously switching his eyes between Mr. Brunner and us, like he wanted Mr. Brunner to notice what was happening, but Mr. Brunner was too engrossed into his book that he didn't even look up when Nancy hit the fountain.

We looked back up to find Mrs. Dodds already at the end of the main hall to the museum.

\_Okay,\_ I thought, \_She's going to make us buy Nancy a new shirt at the gift shop.\_ But apparently that wasn't the idea she had in mind.

We followed her deeper into the museum.

"Where is she taking us?" Percy asked me.

"I have no idea, but I wish I wouldn't have to find out." I replied.

When we finally caught up to her, we were back in the Greek and Roman section.

Except for us, the gallery looked empty.

Mrs. Dodds stood with her arms crossed in front of a big marble

frieze of the gods. She was making this weird noise in her throat, almost like .. growling.

Even without the noise, I would've been nervous. It's weird being almost completely alone with a teacher, especially Mrs. Dodds. Something about the way she looked at the frieze that de-pictured the gods overthrowing their father, almost like she wanted to pulverize it . . .

"You two have been giving us problems, honey," she said

We did the safe thing and said, "Yes Ma'am."

She started to tug on the cuffs of her leather jacket, which made me nervous, as I started to move my wings restlessly. "Did you really think you were going to get away with it?"

The look in her eyes were beyond mad, they were downright evil.

Percy was nervously picking at his shirt

\_She's a teacher, she's not actually going to hurt us . . . is she?\_ I thought

We still went down the safe path as Percy said, "We . . . we'll try harder, Ma'am."

Thunder shook the building.

"We are not fools Jackson twins," Mrs. Dodds snarled. "It was only a matter of time before we found you out. Confess and you will suffer less pain."

I had no idea what she was saying, for fear of her harming me or my brother.

All I could think about was that the teachers must have found out the illegal stash of candy that me and my brother have been selling out of our dorm room for months. Or maybe they found out that my brothers' essay on Tom Sawyer was from the internet without him ever reading the book, and now they suspect that I did the same since they all think we work together as a team, which was true, but never cheating or anything like that, and now they were going to take our grades away, or worse for Percy, they were actually going to make him read the book!

"Well?" she demanded

"Ma'am, I . . . we don't . . ."

"Time's up!" She hissed.

Then, the weirdest thing happened. Her eyes began to glow bright like barbecue coals. Her fingers stretched and turned into long talons. Her jacket melted into her back and turned into big leathery bat wings. She was a shrivelled hag with wings.

Then, if you can believe it, things got even stranger.

Mr. Brunner, who'd been outside a few minutes ago, wheeled his way into the gallery, holding a pen in his hand.

"What ho, Percy!" he shouted and tossed my brother the pen.

Mrs. Dodds lunged at us.

With a yelp, I lunged at my brother, using my wings to propel myself and him away from Mrs. Dodds. Percy grabbed the pen in mid air, but when he grabbed it, it wasn't a pen any more. It was a 3 ft. bronze sword . . . Mr. Brunner's bronze sword, the one that he always used on tournament day.

Mrs. Dodds slashed at us again, and we both leapt out of the way.

I landed a little ways away from Mrs. Dodds, and I almost impaled my back on something. It was a black sword hilt protruding from the museum floor. When I say black, I mean like, a chaotic black.

I grabbed the hilt and pulled. It came out a lot easier than I thought, because I went flying back next to my brother, who was desperately trying to get away from Mrs. Dodds.

He noticed me, and gestured for me to get up quickly.

"We need to get rid of her." I said to my brother

He nodded. "But, how are we going to do it?" He asked me

"Well . . ." I said, "We have swords, might as well use them."

He finally seemed to remember the bronze sword in his hands. He then noticed the black one in my hands.

"Where'd you get that?" He asked me.

"Lets just focus on \_not\_ dying."

"Okay, yea."

Mrs. Dodds lunged at us again with murderous look in her eyes.

And we did the only thing that came naturally to us. We swung the swords.

They passed clean through her body, as if it was a heated knife going through butter. \_Hisss.\_

Mrs. Dodds was like a sand castle next to a power fan. She turned into dust and evaporated on the spot, leaving the smell of sulfur and that evil feeling as if she was still watching us.

We were alone.

Nothing was in my hands any more, and Percy only had a ball-point pen in his hand.

Mr. Brunner wasn't there. In fact, nobody was there except for me and Percy.

My hands were shaking really bad, Percy wasn't doing any better. His face was white with fear as all the blood drained out of it.

My lunch must have had something spoiled in it, or something.

Had we imagined it all? Percy was there with me, and his face was still white with fear.

It started to rain.

Grover was sitting by the fountain, a museum map was over his head. Nancy Bobofit, still standing there, soaked from her swim in the fountain, the rain not helping at all, grumbling to her ugly friends. When she saw us, she said, "I hope Mrs. Kerr whipped your butts."

My brother, still slightly colourless in the face, looked at her confused, "Who?" he asked

"Our teacher. Duh!"

"We . . . never had a teacher named Mrs. Kerr, and if we did, I don't think she came on this trip with us." I said.

"On that same note," Percy said. "Where is Mrs. Dodds?" He asked.

"Who's Mrs. Dodds?" She asked/spat.

We decided to leave that alone.

Nancy rolled her eyes, so we left to go see Grover.

We asked Grover where Mrs. Dodds was.

He said, "Who?"

But he paused and wouldn't meet our eyes for a bit, so we thought he was messing with us.

"Not funny, man." I said, "Not funny at all."

"This is serious man." Percy said

Thunder boomed, which shocked us.

So we went to go see Mr. Brunner, who had his red and white umbrella propped over his wheelchair still, as if he never moved.

He looked up distracted. "Ah, that would be my pen, Percy. Please bring your own writing utensil in the future."

Percy handed him the pen, not even realizing he still had it.

"Sir," I said, "Where is Mrs. Dodds?" I asked.

He stared at me blankly. "Who?"

"The other chaperone. Mrs. Dodds. The pre-algebra teacher." my brother said for me.

He frowned, looking mildly concerned.

"There is no Mrs. Dodds on this trip. As far as I'm concerned, there has never been a Mrs. Dodds at Yancy Academy. Are you two feeling all right?

\* \* \*

><p><strong>Alright, this is going to be the first chapter for my first book. Feel free to leave positive feedback if you like. I already have this entire story laid out in my head, same thing is said with the rest of the 4 books. Though, some suggestions would be nice, but I will only pick one that fits best (or have a bunch of them together) with the idea I have in-mind.<strong>

**\*\*Anyways, feel free to share this with your friends\*\***

**\*\*I will update as soon as I can, so be alert to when it happens. next chapter will be Percy's POV, and I will continue to alternate, Odd numbered chapters for Aaron, Even for Percy.\*\***

**\*\*I hope you like this chapter, and the ones from here on out :)\*\***

**\*\*Peace out...\*\***

## 2. Chapter 2

**\*\*Chapter 2\*\***

**\_\*\*Three Old Ladies Knit The Socks Of Death\*\*\_**

**\*\*[Percy]\*\***

We were used to the occasional weird, or even freaky, experiences, but usually, they pass over quickly. This twenty-four/seven hallucination was more than Aaron and I could handle. for the rest of the school year, the entire school seemed to be messing with us. The students acted, without hesitation, as if this perky blond woman, Mrs. Kerr, was our pre-algebra teacher since Christmas.

Every so often, my brother or I would spring a Mrs. Dodds reference on some unexpected kid, but they always looked at us like we were psycho's

It got to the point were they almost had us convinced that Mrs. Dodds never existed and it had been Mrs. Kerr the whole time, and we just had some problems . . . well, more problems with our heads.

As I said, Almost.

Grover didn't fool us at all. Whenever my brother or I mentioned the name, Mrs. Dodds, he would hesitate, then claim she didn't exist. Aaron and I both knew he was lying to us.

Something was going on, and no-one was telling us what, which left us wondering what really happened at the museum that day.

we Didn't have that much time to think about it during the days, but

at night, visions of Mrs. Dodds, with talons and leathery bat wings, would wake me up in a cold sweat, and my brother claims to have the same things happening to him as well. Which worried us.

The freaky weather continued to happen, which didn't help our mood, at all. One night, a thunderstorm blew the windows out of our dorm room. A few days later, one of the biggest tornado's ever seen, landed in Hudson Valley, touched down only fifty miles away from the Academy, which freaked a handful of people (including Aaron).

One of the current events that our class studied in social studies, was the unusual number of plane casualties over the Atlantic Ocean that year.

I started feeling cranky and irritable most of the time now, and Aaron, who was hard to anger or frustrate, had his grades slip down from C-'s to D's, and got into more fights that the headmaster had to break up. the same thing was happening to me.

Finally, Mr. Nicoll, our English teacher, had had enough and asked us why we were too lazy to study, and asked Aaron why he wasn't studying anymore. I snapped at him for talking to us like that, and called him an 'old sot'. I had no idea what even an 'old sot' was.

The headmaster sent our mother a letter, making it clear that we would not be invited back to Yancy Academy next year.

"Fine." I said to myself "Just fine."

I wanted to go home, badly. I was homesick. And I bet Aaron was a bit, too.

I wanted to be with our Mom in our small apartment on the Upper East Side, even if I had to suffer the torture of public school, my brother having to withstand the offensive comments about him being Different and a Freak. Even though my brother is tough, I don't think even he could withstand those comments.

And then, there was the topic of our nasty and obnoxious, walrus of a step-father and his stupid poker parties, which was pretty much every day.

And there will be things that bot my brother and I would definitely miss at Yancy. The view of the woods next to our dorm, the Hudson River way in the distance, the sweet smell of pine trees. And of course, we both would miss Grover, who'd been a good friend to both of us, even if he was a little strange at some moments, and not told the truth . . .

Anyway, we are both worried that he won't be able to survive next year without us.

And Aaron would miss Latin class, and I also would too. Mr. Brunner's crazy tournament days and his faith that we both could do well in his class. which is why that is the only subject we studied for.

As our exam week got closer, we studied Latin like crazy. We didn't forget what Mr. Brunner told us about this subject being life and death for the two of us, especially after what happened at the museum.

The evening before our exams, I got so frustrated, that the words of my Latin textbook started floating off the page and treated themselves to my frustration. I threw the textbook across the room,

"Oww!" Aaron's voice sounded, from where I threw the textbook. "Can you try to look before you throw that thing?"

"Sorry." I apologised.

"It's fine, man." he said, "Just, those things hurt, especially when I was the one on the receiving end of that throw."

I laughed at that.

"Lets go ask Mr. Brunner for some hints." he suggested

"Yeah. at least we can apologise for the big F I'm going to get on his test."

Aaron ignored that comment. "Come on, lets go." he said, opening our dorm room.

I followed. My brother navigated the dark halls, until we got to where Mr. Brunner's office was.

The light was on, and I was about to head into the office , when Aaron blocked me from going in with his wing and put his finger to his lips, to say \_Shhh\_. I was about to say something, when I heard what he was listening to . . .

". . . worried about them, sir." I heard. Aaron and I stayed perfectly still, listening to what they had to say. I'm not usually one to eavesdrop, but I dare you not to listen when your best friend is talking about you and your twin brother to your teacher.

We inched closer, out of the ways of the window, in case they decided to look out of them.

". . . alone this summer," Grover was saying. "I mean, a Kindly One in the \_school\_! Now that we know for sure, and \_they\_ also know too . . ."

"We would only make matters worse by rushing the two," Mr. Brunner said. "We need the twins to mature more."

"But they might not have enough time. The summer solstice dead-line . . ."

"Will have to be resolved without the twins, Grover. Let them enjoy their ignorance while they still can."

"Sir, he \_saw\_ her . . ."

"Their imagination," Mr. Brunner insisted. "The Mist over the rest of the school will be enough to convince the two of that."

\_I really don't think so.\_ I thought

"Sir, I . . . I can't fail my duties again," Grover's voice was nearly in tears, "You \_know\_ what that would mean for me."

"You haven't failed, Grover," Mr. Brunner said reassuringly, "I should have seen her for what she was. Now, Let's worry about keeping the twins alive until next fall . . ."

At this moment, Aaron was so shocked to be hearing this, that he didn't even realize he was holding his textbook still, until he dropped it with a loud \_Thud\_

Aaron grabbed my shirt and pulled me as fast as he could to the nearest door, which happened to be the \_Supplies Room\_

He pulled me inside and silently shut the door. We hid along the wall with the door on it, so we couldn't be seen through the window.

We heard the soft, \_clip clop\_, \_of . . . hooves? And saw a shadow pass by the window, which looked \_slightly\_ bigger than our wheelchair bound Latin teacher, holding something that looked suspiciously like a bow and arrow.

We were silent with fear.

We saw the shadow retreat from the window, and the sound of, hooves, back away from our door. I almost sighed with relief, when Aaron covered my mouth, making sure I didn't give away our spot.

"Nothing," we heard our Latin teacher murmur, "My nerves haven't been right since the winter solstice."

"Mine neither." we heard Grover say. "But I could have sworn . . ."

"Go back to your dorm," Mr. Brunner told him, "You've got a long day of exam tests, tomorrow."

"Please, don't remind me."

We saw the light go off from the window of the room we were in.

We waited, silently, in the dark, for what seemed like forever.

Finally, Aaron checked the window and motioned it was clear, and we slipped out into the hallway, and navigated the dark school halls to our dorm room.

When we got back to our dorm room, Grover was lying in his bed, studying his Latin textbook, like he'd been there all night.

"Hey," he said, a little bleary-eyed. "You two ready for the test tomorrow?"

Aaron and I didn't answer him.

"You guys look awful," he said. "Are you guys okay?"

"We're just . . ."

"Tired." My brother answered for me.

I turned, so he couldn't read the expression on my face, and started getting ready for bed.

Grover was still trying to read the expression on Aaron's face, but my brother had an excellent poker-face, so Grover gave up trying after half-a-minute.

We were still couldn't comprehend what we'd heard downstairs. I wanted to believe we had imagined the whole thing. But Aaron was acting like he was thinking the same thing. Most people wouldn't know that, but being around him my entire life, considering we're family, I picked up on his body language, or it could be that we're twins.

But one thing was definitely clear: Grover and Mr. Brunner were hiding something behind our backs. They thought we were in some kind of danger, which, coming from Mr. Brunner, made me worry about the possibilities.

The next afternoon, as we were leaving the three-and-a-half hour Latin class exam, my eyes were drowning in all the Latin names I'd gotten wrong or misspelled, Aaron actually did decent in the exam, though we both doubted that we made any higher than a C+. Mr. Brunner called both of us back into the class.

For a moment, I thought he found out about Aaron and I eavesdropping on his conversation the night before. But apparently, that wasn't the case.

"Percy, Aaron." He said. "Don't be discouraged about leaving Yancy. It's . . . for your own good."

I know he was trying to pick his words carefully, but my eyes still stung from those words. Aaron's 'poker-face' was not saving some of his emotions from showing.

Nancy Bobofit and her ugly friends were silently laughing, though Mr. Brunner's full attention was on me and Aaron, so he didn't notice.

"Okay, sir." I mumbled.

"I mean . . ." Mr. Brunner said, still trying to pick his words as carefully as he could. "This isn't the right place for you two. It was only a matter of time."

At this moment, Aarons poker-face wore out, and his eyes were a bit red from holding back his emotions.

I understood. Here was our favourite teacher, in front of the whole class, telling us 'It was only a matter of time,' whatever that meant, after telling us the \_whole\_ year that he believed in us. Here he was, telling us we couldn't handle Yancy, and that we were destined to get kicked out.

"Right," Aaron mumbled

"No, no," Mr. Brunner said. "Oh, confound it all. What I'm trying to say is . . . You two aren't normal, and that, that's nothing to be . . ."

"Thanks." My brother said, losing his 'cool'. "Thanks a lot, sir, for reminding me." he said.

"Aaron . . ." Mr. Brunner started to say, but Aaron was already out the classroom door.

"You've got to realize, Mr. Brunner," I said "That he gets these comments daily." I said. "I guess, I'll go talk to him."

I left the class before he could say anything. I confess that I was mad at him, mostly for not realising what he said about Aaron. Though, I don't think he meant it like that.

Anyway, I went out into the hall to go talk to my brother, who was up against the wall with his wings wrapped around him.

He looked up at me, his eyes were red and teary with emotion.

"Hey," I said. "You feeling all right?"

He hesitated, thinking about his answer.

"Not really sure about that, bro."

"You know, Mr. Brunner really didn't mean what he said."

"Can we not talk about that right now?" he asked. "Let's just get on with our day. I'll be fine." And we left that moment alone.

On the last day of the term, I shoved all of my clothes into a suitcase, and called it a day.

All of the other guys at Yancy were joking around and talking about what they had planned for the summer. One of them was going on a long hiking trip on some mountain in Switzerland. Another guy was going on a cruise in the Caribbean for a month. They were all juvenile delinquents, like me and my brother, but they were rich juvenile delinquents. Unlike us, they actually had a father, but they were executives, or ambassadors, or famous celebrities. We were two nobodies, from a family of nobodies.

When ever we passed a group of them, they would ask us . . . well, me, because they still thought Aaron as a freak, which really pissed me off, but I tried not to show it. Though I don't know how Aaron was able to withstand so many offensive comments, or even be completely ignored by most people, but he did.

Anyway, when ever they passed us in the hall they would ask me what I was doing over the summer break, and I told them we were going back into the city.

"Oh," one of them said. "That's cool." And they went back to whatever conversation they were having before, as if I never existed.

What I didn't tell them, was that the both of us would have to get summer jobs, like walking dogs, or selling newspapers, and spend all

of our free time worrying where we would go to school in the fall for our seventh year.

The only person me and Aaron were dreading saying goodbye to, was Grover, but it turned out, we didn't have to say goodbye, just yet, because he took the same Greyhound as us into Manhattan.

During the whole bus ride, Grover was constantly looking over his shoulder as if he was worried something bad might happen. It just occurred to me that he was always acting nervous and fidgety when ever we left Yancy Academy, we'd always assumed that he was afraid someone would tease or pick on him, but I didn't think a random stranger would come up to him and call him names, or anything like that. So I assumed it was something different.

Though, another strange thing that happened . . . well, more like didn't happen, was people not noticing Aarons wings, which were sticking out a bit into the Isl. But at least people weren't freaking out about him being on the bus, so I labled it as 'not important' at the moment.

Grover was still nervously looking around the bus.

Finally, I couldn't stand it anymore

I said, "Looking for the 'Kindly Ones?'"

Grover nearly jumped out of his seat, which startled my brother, who nearly got elbowed in the face.

"Wha . . . what do y-you mean?" he asked.

I confessed about me and Aaron eavesdropping on his conversation the night before the exams.

his eye twitched. "How much did you two hear?"

"Oh . . . not much," I lied

"What's the summer solstice deadline?" Aaron said, nearly startling him again.

Grover winced. "L-look, guys . . . I was just worried about you see? I mean, hallucinating about demon math teachers and . . ."

"Grover . . . " My brother tried to interrupt.

". . . I was telling Mr. Brunner that, maybe you two were overstressed or something like that, because there was no such person as Mrs. Dodds, and . . ."

"Grover!" I said sternly. "You're a really, really bad liar."

His ears turned a bright pink.

He fished out a grubby business card from his shirt pocket, all the while not looking at either of us. "Just take this, okay? In case you two need me this summer."

The card print was murder for our dyslexic eyes, but Aaron made

something out, which went like

\_\*\*Grover Underwood\*\*\_

\_\*\*Keeper\*\*\_

\_\*\*Half-Blood Hill\*\*\_

\_\*\*Long Island New York\*\*\_

\_\*\*(800) 009-0009\*\*\_

"What's Half . . ."

"Don't say it out loud!" He yelped. "That's my, um . . . summer address."

My heart sank like lead. Grover had a summer home. Aaron and I never considered that his family was as rich as most of the other kids at Yancy.

"Okay," Aaron almost muttered. "So, if I want to come visit your mansion."

He nodded. "O-or if you need me."

"Why would we need you?" I said. It came out \_a lot\_ harsher than I had meant it to be.

Grover blushed right down to his Adam's apple. "L-look, guys, the truth is, I-I kind of have to protect you two."

Me and my brother just stared at him, with almost blank expressions.

I can't believe it. All year long, both my brother and I, had gotten into fights, keeping bullies away from him. we both lost lots of sleep that we couldn't afford to loose, worried about what would happen to him next year without us around to protect him. And here he was, turning the tables, and saying that he had to protect \_us\_.

"Grover," my brother said in an almost monotone voice, "What exactly do you need to protect us from?"

Just then, a huge grinding noise came from under our feet, and Grover covered his ears, as if it bothered him like nails on a chalkboard. The whole bus started to smell like rotten eggs. The bus driver practically limped the Greyhound over to the side of the highway.

We had broken down on a stretch of country road, almost in the middle of nowhere on our side of the highway, there was nothing but maple trees and litter from passing cars who just chuck it out their windows. On the other side, across four lanes of asphalt, shimmering with the afternoon heat, was an old-fashioned fruit stand, and when I say \_old-fashioned\_, I mean like, the \_really\_ old fruit stands.

Though, the stuff on sale looked good. Stuff I wouldn't explain because it'd make you go hungry. There were no customers, which

shocked me, because, again, the stuff on sale looked really good. Just three old-ladies knitting the biggest pair of socks Aaron and I have ever seen.

They were the size of adult sweaters, but the clearly looked like socks. The old lady on the right, knitted one of the socks. The one in the middle, held a big basket full of electric-blue yarn. And the one on the right knitted the other sock

All three of them looked ancient beyond count. With pale, white faces wrinkled like raisins, silvery white hair tied back in white bandanna's, bony, wrinkled arms, with elbows that could be used to poke someone's eye out.

Though, the weirdest thing was, they seemed to be looking directly at me and Aaron.

I looked over at Grover, who didn't seem 'all right' with the situation.

"Grover?" I said. "Hey . . ."

"Please tell me they're not looking at you . . ."

"They're not looking at us." My brother said sarcastically.

If it was possible, his face paled even more. "They are, aren't they?"

"Yeah. Weird. huh?" I said

"You think those socks would fit me? or I might be able to fit in them." My brother said, still trying to lighten the mood.

"Not funny, Aaron. Not funny at all." Grover said, seriously

"Aww, come one, man! Lighten up a bit . . ." I started to say.

At this moment, the old lady in the middle took out a huge pair of scissors, gold and silver, long bladed . . . what looked like garden sheers.

I heard Grover catch his breath.

I was about to ask him what was wrong with that, but he beat me to saying anything.

"We're getting on the bus. Now." he said

"What?!" I said

"It's like, a thousand degrees in there!" Aaron protested. "No way, are we getting back on there, until it's fixed." He said firmly.

"And I'm saying. Get on the bus." He said back.

The two of us didn't budge from our spots

On the other side of the four lanes of traffic, the three old ladies

were still watching the two of us, never breaking eye contact with us, which was weird. The middle one, still holding the scissors, cut the yarn. And I swear, that I heard the \_snip\_, across the four lanes, full of cars passing by. Her two friends balled up their yarn, leaving us wondering who the socks could be made for . . . Sasquatch, or Godzilla.

At the rear end of the Greyhound, the driver ripped out a huge, smoking piece of metal and the engine roared back to life.

Everyone taking the bus cheered.

"Darn right!" yelled the bus driver. "Everyone, back on-board!"

Once we got on, and started going, I started feeling feverish, as if I'd caught the flu. And when I looked next to me, at Aaron, he was almost shivering, wrapping his wings tight around his body for warmth.

And Grover didn't look any better than Aaron did. His teeth were chattering and he was shivering.

"Grover?" I asked.

"Y-yeah?"

"What are you not telling us?"

He started dabbing his forehead with his shirt-sleeve, whipping the sweat away from his brow. "What did you two see at the fruit stand?" He asked.

"You mean, the three old ladies?" Aaron asked. "They-they're not like, Mrs. Dodds, are they?"

The expression on his face said 'they're worse'. The three old ladies at the fruit stand were far, far more worse than Mrs. Dodds. "Just tell me what you saw."

"The middle one took out her scissors,"

"And she cut the yarn." We both said.

Grover closed his eyes and looked like he was crossing himself, but it looked like a \_much\_ older gesture than that.

"You saw her snip the cord." he said

"Yeah so?" But as soon as the words left my mouth, I knew that it was a big deal.

"This is \_so\_, not happening," he mumbled. He started nervously picking at his fingers and shirt. "I don't want this to be like \_last time\_."

"What 'last time?'" Aaron said, looking worried, and almost scared at what Grover was saying.

"It's always sixth grade, why sixth grade? They never make it past sixth"

"Grover," I said nervously, because he was really starting to freak us out with all his muttering. "What are you talking about?"

"Let me walk you guys home. Please, promise me."

This was a strange request, especially coming from Grover, but we promised him this.

"Grover," I said. "Is this, like, a superstition, or something?" I asked

No answer.

"Grover," My brother said. "Does the snipping of the yarn mean someone's . . . someone's going to die?"

He looked at the two of us, mournfully. As if guessing what kind of flowers we would like best on our grave.

### 3. Chapter 3

**\*\*Chapter 3\*\***

**\*\*Grover Unexpectedly Loses His Pants\*\***

**\*\*[Aaron]\*\***

Time to confess: we ditched Grover immediately after we got off the bus.

We know it was rude, but we have reasons.

First off, Grover was really freaking us out, acting like it was our funeral, an muttering "Why does it always have to be sixth grade?" But we weren't surprised when he had to go to the bathroom right away, because when Grover gets nervous, his bladder acts up.

And the second reason why we ditched him, was because we both really, really wanted to see our mother again.

Even though it had only been a couple months since we had last seen her, we were definitely homesick, even if we had to put up with our nasty, abusive stepfather, who was always home.

Anyway, Grover told us to wait for us while he went to the bathroom, so we slipped out of the terminal and hailed a taxi.

"East One-hundred-and-forth and First," Percy told the driver.

We decided that I shouldn't fly us back home because, it was the middle of the day in summer, so a lot of cars were on the roads. In the winter, he flew us back home, because there were actually some snow and clouds that would hide us from any onlookers.

Also, a word about our mother, before you meet her.

Her name is Sally Jackson, and she's the best person in the world, no doubt about that, which just proves our theory that the best people

always seem to have the worst luck. Her own parents died in a plane crash when she was five-and-a-half, and raised by an Uncle who never cared for her. She always wanted to be a novelist, so she spent her High-School working to save enough money for her to go to a college with a good creative-writing program for her to learn how to write. Then, her Uncle got sick, with cancer, and she had to quit her school to take care of him in her senior year. After he died, she was left with absolutely nothing. No money. No family. And no diploma.

The only real break she ever had, was meeting our father.

We didn't have any memories of him, at all. The only thing close to confirming he existed to us, was this warm glow, maybe the barest traces of a smile. Our mom doesn't like to talk about him, because it makes her sad to think about it. She doesn't even have pictures of him either.

You see, they were never married. She told us that he was very rich and important, and that their relationship was a secret, no one else knew. Then, on day, he sailed out across the Atlantic on some important travel, and never came back.

"Lost at sea," our mother always told us, "Not dead, lost at sea."

She always worked odd jobs, took night classes, working towards her High School diploma, and raise the two of us, all on her own. But she never complained, not even once. But Percy and I both knew, that we weren't easy kids to raise,

Then, she married Gabe Ugliano. The bane of our existence. Who was nice for about the first thirty seconds we knew him, then he stripped away that 'kind act' and showed his true colours as a world class jerk. When Percy and I were young, we nicknamed him Smelly Gabe. You can't blame us for that, because his smell was toxic.

Between the three of us, we made our mothers life pretty stressful. Between the way Gabe treated her, and the way me and my brother got along with him, well . . . when we got home from Yancy is one example.

My brother and I walked into or family's little apartment, hoping our mom was home from working. Instead, Smelly Gabe and his friends were in the living room playing poker, television blaring ESPN, chips and beer cans discarded everywhere, not just in the living room, but the whole house.

Hardly looking up at all, he said, "So, you two brats are home."

"Where's our mom?"

"Working," he said. "You two got any cash to hand over?"

That's it, and that's all it ever has been for us. No, Welcome back. Good to see you two. How has your lives been these last six months?\_

Gabe had put on a lot of extra weight he couldn't afford to gain. He used to look like a walrus, but now he looked like a giant Blob Fish

in dirty thrift store clothes. He only had about three hairs on his head (whatever caused him to lose it all, I don't want to know), all combed over his shiny, bald scalp, as if that made him look better.

He was supposed to manage the Electronics Mega-Mart in Queens, we don't know how he even got hired there, or managed to keep the job, because he stayed home all the time collecting paychecks and spending it on cigars, choking on the poisons that come from it, and I was surprised that the building's fire alarm didn't go off. And beer. Always on beer. That's why there were more cans of it strewn on the floor than anything else. Whenever we came home, he expected us to give him money to gamble in his game, which he called or 'guy secret'. Meaning, if either one of us tell our mom, he'll knock us out the window.

"We have no cash." I said

He sceptically raised a greasy eyebrow.

Gabe was like a bloodhound when it came to money, which surprised everyone, because his own smell should've covered up everything around him.

"You two took a taxi, because it's summer," he said. "Probably paid with a twenty. You've got six, seven bucks in change. If anyone expects to live under this roof, they ought to carry their own weight. Am I right, Eddie?"

Eddie, who was the building's super, looked at the two of us with a hint of sympathy.

"Come on, Gabe," he said. "They just got here."

"Am I right, Eddie?" Gabe said, a bit more stern

Eddie shrunk back into his seat, looking at his poker ships with interest. I was grateful for him sticking up for us, even if it was a failed attempt to do so anyway.

"Fine." Percy said, giving in. "I hope you lose."

"Your report cards came in, brain boy, I wouldn't act so snooty!" he said to Percy.

"Hey!" I said to him. "Leave my brother alone

I probably should have left it alone, because that probably got us both in more trouble with him, more than just existing, which was enough to tick Smelly Gabe off as it is.

"You . . ."

Gabe started to say, but was interrupted by the opening and closing of the front door to our apartment. Percy and I took that as an escape, because it was probably our mother coming home from work. We ran to the front of our apartment, overjoyed that it was in fact, our mom.

"Percy! Aaron!" She shouted excitedly. "Oh, my boys!"

"Mom," I said weakly.

"You're crushing us . ." Percy said, the out of him.

"Sorry. She pulled back from the hug and smiled "You two have grown since Christmas!"

Our mother can make anyone feel good, just by being near them. She was wearing her Sweet on America uniform, which smelled like the best things in the world: chocolate, licorice, and a lot of other stuff that she sold at the candy shop in Grand Central. She always brought home a huge bag of 'free samples', the way she always did when we got home.

We decided to have a talk in our room, so Gabe wouldn't hear what we were talking about.

We all sat on Percy's bed, while me and him attacked different sweets from our bag of 'free samples', our mother demanding to know everything that we either didn't tell when we were home on winter break, or whatever we didn't tell her in our letters. I was grateful that she wasn't mad of our being expelled and that she didn't even bring up that topic. She didn't care about that at all. But were we both okay? Were her two little boys doing all right?

Percy told her she was smothering him and to lay off. But secretly, I knew he was glad she was here, and so was I.

Suddenly, from the other room, Gabe yelled out, "Hey Sally . . . how about some bean dip, huh?"

I was seriously debating on whether I should get my brother to toss that pig out the window.

Our mother was the nicest person in the world. She should have been married to a billionaire rather than that garbage dump in the living room

We both tried to make the year sound better than it was. We told her that we weren't to down about being expelled from Yancy. We tried to sound exited that we almost lasted an entire year this time, which for us, was a new record by far. We had made some new friends. We hadn't done that bad in Latin class. And to be honest, the fights werent as bad as the headmaster said they were. We both liked Yancy Academy. We put such a good twist to our last few days at Yancy, that I almost convinced myself. I started thinking about Grover and Mr. Brunner. Even Nancy Bobofit didn't seem so bad at the time.

Until we got to the part with the museum . . .

"What?" she asked us, trying to guess at what could have made us falter. "Did something scare you two?"

"No, "

"Mom." we lied

I felt bad lying to her. I wanted to tell her what happened with Mrs. Dodds and the three old ladies at the fruit stand with the yarn, and

I had a feeling Percy was feeling the exact same way, but I thought it would sound crazy.

She knew we were holding something back, I could tell by the look on her face, but she didn't force us to tell what it was.

"I have a surprise for you two," she said. "We're going to the beach."

Our eyes widened.

"Montauk?" we both asked.

"Three nights, same cabin as last time."

"When?" we both asked, waiting for an answer.

She smiled. "As soon as I get out of my work uniform."

I was utterly shocked, and Percy's face mirrored my expression. The three of us haven't been to Montauk for a couple summers now, all because of Gabe was really greedy and said 'there wasn't enough money for the trip', which really pissed Percy and I off.

Gabe appeared in the doorway of our room, growling, "Bean dip, Sally? Are you too deaf to hear me?"

Percy and I were ready to toss him down the stairs and beat him, but I met our mother's eyes and I understood she was offering us a deal; be nice to Gabe for a bit. Just until she was packed and ready for our trip to Montauk. Then we would get out of here.

I held my brother back, so that he wouldn't anger Gabe. When he saw how serious I was, he calmed down, just enough to not want to kill Gabe.

"I was on my way, honey," she told Gabe. "We were just talking about our trip."

Gabe narrowed his eyes "The trip . . . You mean you were actually serious about that?"

"I knew it," Percy muttered

"He wont let us go." I said.

"Of course he will," our mother said. "Gabe's just worried about money. that's all. Besides," she continued. "Gabriel won't have to settle for bean dip. I'll make sure to make him enough seven-layer dip to last the entire weekend."

Gabe heard this and softened a bit."So . . ." he said. "This money for the trip comes out of your clothes budget, right?"

"Yes, Gabe." she said.

"And you won't take my car anywhere but there and back."

We'll be careful."

Gabe scratched his giant double chin. "Maybe . . ." he said. "If you hurry up with that bean dip," he added. "And if the kids apologise for interrupting my poker game. And if he . . ." he said, pointing at me. "Says sorry for being rude."

\_Maybe you should think of what you did to deserve it, and maybe if I kick you in the soft spot and shove you out the window\_, I thought

But I \_really\_ wanted to go to Montauk, so I stayed quiet

Gabe looked at me expectantly, which really pissed me off.

I wonder why our mother \_still\_ put up with this guy, especially when he treated her with immense disrespect.

"We're sorry," Percy muttered.

"We're really sorry for interrupting your \_incredibly\_ important poker game. Please go back to it, right now." I said.

Gabe looked like his tiny brain was working to its limits, trying to detect sarcasm in our apology.

"Whatever." he finally decided.

He then lumbered back to his buddies in the living room.

"Thank you." our mother said to us. "Now, can you two help me carry our bags out to the car?" she asked.

"Yea," I said

"Anything to get out of here as fast as we can."

She smiled at us.

"Once we get to Montauk, you two can tell me . . . whatever you forgot to tell me." her smile wavered a bit.

For a brief moment, I saw anxiety in her eyes, but it lasted for a millisecond, only to be replaced by the same smile as before, though it seemed just a bit forced.

She ruffled our hair, and then went to make Gabe his seven-layer dip.

About an hour later, we were ready to leave for Montauk

Gabe, being stubborn, got up from his poker game to see us away, Sad that he would be losing our mom's cooking for a whole weekend, and even worse, his 78 Camaro, which he barely ever used. He gave me and Percy a lecture about 'harming his car'.

Like we were going to be the ones driving the thing.

We were both twelve, not close to being eligible to drive yet.

But Gabe Didn't care. If anything, and I mean \_anything\_, happened to his Camaro, he would somehow find a way to blame me or Percy for it,

most likely both of us.

"Not a scratch on this car, brain boy." he began lecturing my brother. "Not \_One\_."

I just rolled my eyes and got in the back seat of the car, as Percy got in the front.

Suddenly, we both did something very odd at the moment, and we can't explain why. Almost like we did it subconsciously. As Gabe reached the screen door, we both made a hand gesture in unison, the one we saw Grover do on the bus that I thought he was crossing himself, now I realized that it was more of warding-off-evil gesture. We made a clawed hand over our hearts, then shoved that gesture outward toward the 'evil', known as Gabe. We were surprised when the screen door shut so hard that it whacked him on the backside and sent him up the flight of stairs, almost like you see when someone was just shot out of a cannon. It was most likely a freak accident with the hinges.

We told our mom to step on it, then we peeled out of the lot and onto the road, heading to Montauk.

The cabin we always rented was on the south shore of Long Island, way out at the tip. It was a small pastel box with faded curtains, half shredded and sunken into the dunes.

We had to clean out the place every time, because it always had spiders in the cabinets and sand in the bed, but we were able to sweep them away, but it was still a pain in the butt to do. Our mother didn't mind the state of the cabin every time we got there, because this was the place she had met our father.

Most of the time, the water was too cold to swim in. But on times that it wasn't cold enough to freeze our noses off, Percy would always ask me to fly him up above the water, so that he could dive from that height.

Me and my brother were surprisingly good swimmers for our age, better than some adults as well.

As we got closer to Montauk, our mom seemed to grow younger in years, looking like mountains of stress had been relieved off of her shoulders. Her eyes turned the colour of the sea.

We got there at sunset, cleaning up the run-down cabin and opening all the windows, and at least tried to dig the sand dunes away from the windowsills. We walked on the beach for a couple hours, fed blue corn ships to some passer by seagulls, and munched on blue saltwater taffy and a lot of other sweets that we had brought along with us.

We should explain the blue food.

Once, our mother and Gabe were having this argument, which was majorly small at the time, that blue food didn't exist, that there was 'no such thing' and other stuff like that. But ever since that day, our mother had gone out of her way to make blue food. Blue matching twin birthday cakes for Percy and I (Obviously on our birthday), mixed blueberry smoothies. She bought blue-corn tortilla chips and brought home as many blue candies as she could bring back.

All of this as well as keeping her maiden name, Jackson, rather than calling herself 'Mrs. Ugliano', which sounded stupid anyway, was proof that she was a rebel like us, not suckered up to Gabe and his greedy needs.

When it got dark out, we decided to make a fire, and I decided to light it. The memories here . . . how I longed to be a kid again, carefree of what was happening in the world around me, living a somewhat happy life (Though nobody could live a '\_happy\_' life with Gabe around).

I was lost in my thoughts, until Percy snapped his fingers in front of my face.

"Watch out," he said. "You might burn yourself with the lighter."

He was right, I had almost burned my hand because the lighter had already lit the fire, and the flames licked at my hand. I instinctively pulled it back.

We were roasting marshmallows, kind of a tradition around a camp fire. Mom told us the stories of when she was young and her parents had taken her here, until they died in a plane crash. She also mentioned the books she wanted to write one day, when she got enough money to do so.

Eventually, I got up the nerve to ask what was always on me and my brother's minds when we came here. Our dad. But Percy beat me to that question.

Our mom looked lost in memories, and I figured she would tell us the same thing she always did when it came to our father. But we never tired of hearing it.

"He was kind," She said. "Tall, handsome, and powerful, but gentle too. You two both have his black hair, you know, and his green eyes."

She sighed, fishing out a blue jelly bean out of her bag of candy. "I wish he could see you two, he would be so proud."

I really didn't see what he could be proud of, I mean, two ADHD and dyslexic kids, who have been kicked out of every school they have attended.

"How old were we?" I asked. "When he left?"

She stared at the flames coming from our little camp fire. Her response took me away.

"He was only with me for one summer," she said. "Right here at this beach

"But . . ." Percy started. "He knew us as babies, right?"

"No, honey. He knew I was expecting a baby, turned out to be two, but he never saw either of you. He had to leave before you were born."

That thought didn't settle well with me. The fact that our father had

never known us, much less seen us. The reason why this new information didn't settle well with me or my brother, is because the only memory, we thought to be of him, was this warm glow . . . a smile. And now we were being told that he never knew us.

Percy and I always assumed he knew us in our infant year. Our mom had never said anything about it outright, but even then, I'd felt like it must have been true. And here we were, being proven wrong.

I admit, I felt a little resentment against our father, but it died down a bit almost instantly, though it would be there for a while, especially since he left us to suffer with Smelly Gabe.

"Are you going to send us away again?" Percy asked, his voice cracking a bit. "To another boarding school?"

She didn't meet our eyes, pulling a marshmallow from the fire.

"I don't know," Her voice was heavy. "I think . . . I think we will have to do something."

"Because you don't want us around?", Percy looked like he wanted to take what he said back.

Our mom was on the verge of crying. "Oh, Percy, no. I . . . I have to, honey. for your own good. I have to send you two away."

Her words reminded me painfully of what Mr. Brunner had said to us . . . that it was for the best that we left Yancy.

"Because I'm not normal." I said, they both turned to look at me. I just stared at the flames. Percy looked like he wanted to punch me for saying something that stupid. What a loving brother.

Our mother was close to breaking down.

"You say that as if . . . as if that was a bad thing, Aaron. But you have no idea how important you are. Both of you." she said.

"I thought Yancy would be far enough away, for you two to finally be safe." she said, almost to herself.

"Safe from what?" we both asked.

She looked up, and met our eyes. A flood of memories began to pour into my head, like a pitcher pouring water into a bowl . . . all of the weird and scary things that happened to both me and Percy over the years, most of which, we both had tried our hardest to forget.

One example was when we were in third grade. A man in a black trench coat was stalking us on the playground. Then, when the teachers threatened to call the police on him, he walked away grumbling. Though, no-one believed us when we said that under his broad-brimmed hat, he only had one eye, right in the middle of his head.

Way before that, a really early memory, when Percy and I were in Pre-school, and a teacher had accidentally put Percy to sleep in a cot that a snake had slithered its way into. When our mother came to get us, she found Percy and I playing with a long, snaky rope that

Percy somehow managed to strangle with his meaty toddler hands.

I shivered remembering that.

In every single school my brother and I attended, something dangerous and scary had happened, and we were forced to move.

We both knew that we had to tell our mother about what happened with Mrs. Dodds, and our hallucination that we somehow sliced her up. But we were afraid it would be the end of our family trip, and I, personally, didn't want to spend any more time near Gabe than needed.

"I've tried to keep you two close to me," she said. "They told me that it was a huge mistake . . . but there is only one other option for you two . . . the place your father wanted you to be. And I . . . I just can't seem to let you go there."

"Wait," I said. "Why would he want us to go anywhere special, when he has never met us in the first place?" I asked. Percy nodded, wanting to know the answer too.

She looked at us, sadness clearly in her eyes.

"It's a special place, for . . . for kids like you." she said.

"Please," Percy groaned. "Not another boarding school."

"Not a school," she calmly said. "A summer camp."

Hold up . . . you're probably wondering the same thing as me and my brother; why would our father, someone we had apparently never met, want us to go to a summer camp? Well, you're about to find out soon . . .

"I'm sorry, you two," she said, seeing the shocked look on our faces. "But I can't talk about it, It . . . it might mean that I will never see you two again, say goodbye, for good."

"I thought you said it was just a summer camp?" I asked.

She turned her head towards the fire, the look on her face meaning that if we press her anymore, she might start crying.

I am always used to weird, vivid dreams. But this one, was one of the worst I have had in a while.

It was a stormy night, and I was standing there on the beach, my wings wrapped around me protectively, so I wouldn't freeze to death (But I knew it was just a dream, and not real). Two beautiful animals, a white horse and a golden eagle, were fighting to the death. The two animals exchanged attacks the horse kicking the eagle's wings, and the eagle trying to rake its claws across the horse's muzzle. A dark, monstrous voice seemed to be amused by the animals' fighting, goading them to fight harder.

I ran towards them, knowing I had to stop them before anything goes wrong, but the wind was so strong that I was sliding in the sand.

I had to retract my wings from around my body, exposing me to the cold weather, so that I didn't go flying backwards and end up buried under the sand.

I saw my brother on the other side of them, desperately trying to run against the wind, but to no avail.

We watched, hopelessly, as the eagle dive down, aiming at the horses wide eyes, as the scene fell away. Waking me in a cold sweat.

I heard thunder, and realised that there was actually a storm happening, the ones that crack houses from their foundations. There weren't any animals on the beach. No horse, no eagle. Lightning flashed through the window, giving me the false impression of daylight. Waves relentlessly washed up against the shore, pounding the dunes like artillery.

I looked over from the floor I slept on, to the bed my brother sit strait up in. his eyes wide, but a bit tired.

The next thunderclap woke our mother up. She sat up strait, with wide eyes and said, "Hurricane!"

A year ago, that would've sounded ridiculous. Long Island never saw hurricanes this early in the year, but with all these storms brewing, I could think anything was possible.

We were startled out of our thoughts as we heard a soft banging sound against the door of our rental. The door sprung open, due to the severe wind, and standing there, was our friend.

"Grover," I said to myself.

"Searching . . . all night," he gasped. "What were you two thinking?" he asked us. But I just stared at him, dumbfoundedly.

Our mother looked at us, her face was stern, but riddled with fear.

"Percy, Aaron," she shouted over the wind. "What didn't you tell me, what happened at school?"

I didn't even register my mother talking to us, just stared at him. I couldn't understand what I was seeing.

"\_O Zeu kai alloi theoi!"\_ he yelled. "It's right behind me! Didn't you \_tell\_ her?"

I still didn't register his words, until I realized that he had cursed in Ancient Greek, and I had understood him perfectly. Sensing my brother right next to me, still as a rock, just staring at Grover like he just came from another planet. But he could have, from what I was seeing in front of me right now, right where his legs should be . . . where they\_ should\_ be . . .

"\_Boys!\_" She yelled sternly at us. "Tell me. \_Now."\_

Percy and I rambled something, together, about Mrs. Dodds, the demon math teacher, and three old ladies on the side of the road. I didn't know if they could understand what we were saying, because we sure as

heck didn't.

She wasted no time after we finished , and grabbed her purse, and tossed Percy his rain coat. I didn't have one here, because I could easily just cover myself with my wings to keep warm. But that wasn't what I was worrying about.

Grover was runni-. . . no, trotting, towards our step-father's car. And all of the sudden, Grover's muscular disorder in his legs all made sense to me, how he could run so fast but still limp.

Because where his lower half should be, wasn't human. No.

Our friend, was half goat.

\* \* \*

><p><strong>Hey guys! I'm <strong>\_\*\*really, really, really\*\*\_\*\* sorry that this update came so late, but I had a **\_\*\*lot\*\*\_\*\*** of school work and I'm only now, able to upload it.\*\*

**\*\*So, here you go!\*\***

**\*\*I hope you enjoy this one, because I put more effort into the end than I should have been able to, considering I finished this at 11pm.\*\***

**\*\*Next chapter, if there are any reviews, I will try my best to answer any questions, and ignore the hate comments.\*\***

**\*\*Anyway, I am asking you guys (I know, I shouldn't ask anything of you since I made you wait this long, but just listen) if you could try to create a good cover picture for this book, that would be amazing!\*\***

**\*\*Anyway, enjoy!\*\***

**\*\*Peace out ..\*\***

End  
file.